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Travels in Kamtchatka and Siberia; with a Narrative of a Residence in China. By Peter Dobell, Counsellor of the Court of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Russia. 2 vols. London, Colburn and Bentley.

EVERY new traveller who visits a country, flatters himself he sees a great deal that others have not seen. And no doubt so he does. Even if he beholds none but the same objects, he beholds them from a different point of view. No two travellers perhaps have ever taken the same view of any object. Much less have their descriptions exactly coincided. A peculiar coloring, in keeping with the habits and associations of each narrator, is imparted to his story. Thus it is not surprising that the same country, visited at different periods, by men of different dispositions,—although the country itself may not have materially changed in the interval, should assume a varied aspect. Siberia is a good example. How different a scene is it in the pages of the grave John Bell of Antermomy, from what it is in those of the gay madcap Captain John Dundas Cochrane! John Bell went in the train of Mr. Ismayloff, the Russian Ambassador, to Peking, upwards of a hundred years ago; the gallant Captain only a few years since footed it every inch of the way to Kamtchatka and back again, and tells us many an amusing story of his adventurous exploit, yet, coloring and embellishment apart, Siberia we decided in our own minds was not essentially altered. A single passage in Mr. Dobell's book induces us considerably to modify that opinion. "There is an excellent, well served post all the way from St. Petersburg to Yakutsk, and not an interval between any two stations exceeding fifty versts long, the most of them being from twenty to thirty versts, in a distance of eight thousand five hundred versts! From Yakutsk to Ochotsk, however, that is to say, upwards of a thousand versts, the stations are some of them from one hundred and fifty to two hundred and fifty versts in relative distance, and travellers are obliged to have tents, and encamp every night by the way." Where such facility of intercourse has been established, it is impossible, no matter how short the period since, but that civilization must have made progress. With this fact in our recollection, we peruse the interesting volumes of Mr. Dobell with a better zest—we are prepared to hear his account of a country which has really undergone improvement, and we are anxious to inquire in what, and to what extent this improvement has taken place. Mr. Dobell traversed the great northern division of Asia, by the homeward route, from east to west, from Kamtchatka to St. Petersburg. From Avatcha we find him proceeding by a difficult land journey to Ochotsk, thence to Yakutsk, Irkutsk, Tomsk, and Tobolsk; and the period of the journey is in the years 1812 and 1813. His residence in China, an account of which occupies the latter half of the second volume, belongs to an earlier and a later date. But we shall confine ourselves to some extracts from the Siberian tour in our present number, reserving many curious particulars relating to the celestial empire for a second notice.

Felons from Tobolsk and western Siberia, are transported to Kamtchatka. This is injurious to the simple and amiable habits of the natives, whose character may be gathered from the following extract:

"All the Kamtchatdales I met with, were Christians of the Greek persuasion, and appeared attentive to their devotions. Their hospitality is excessive, and it is carried to an extreme amongst themselves that becomes ridiculous. They pay one another visits, which last for a month or six weeks, until the generous host, finding his stock of provisions exhausted, is forced to give a hint to his guest to take his departure. This is managed by presenting to him at dinner a dish called *tolkoota*, a kind of olio, or hodge podge, composed of a number of meats, fish, and vegetables, all mixed together, and very difficult to prepare. It is the *dernier resort* of the master of the house, and the moment this dish is served up, the guests take the hint, and leave him the following day, without feeling in the least dissatisfied; the proceeding being understood amongst them.

"I thought at first the natives of Kamtchatka were rather stupid; but I soon found they were more timid than dull, and possessed a good deal of that quickness and cunning belonging to the Asiatics generally. You do not discover a Kamtchatdale well until he has drunk a glass or two of watsky.* Their remarks are sometimes very clever, and exhibit good strong common sense.

The first thing a traveller must do when he arrives at a Kamtchatdale house, is to treat the family with tea, of which they are excessively fond. I once saw a Kamtchatdale drink eleven half pint bowls of tea at a sitting; and he declared he could have completed the dozen, had there been water enough in the kettle!

They speak very slowly, with rather an effeminate voice, making use of the simplest language, but almost always with good sense. When they do not wish to come to the point directly, they convey their meaning by some curious allegory, having relation to bears, dogs, fishing, and hunting."

It is curious to observe the old patriarchal custom of *earning* a wife, still flourishing in this remote quarter of the world. Though Captain Cochrane, as we recollect, was fortunate enough to obtain a Kamtchatdale bride on easier terms.

"I found, on conversing with the Toyune, that the Kamtchatdales of Oukinsky coast have adopted some of the customs and habits of their northern neighbours, the Karaikées. For instance; should a young man fall in love with a girl, and that he is not rich enough to obtain her by any other means, he immediately enslaves himself to her father as a servant for three, four, five, or ten years, according to agreement, before he is permitted to marry her. When the term agreed on expires, he is allowed to marry her, and live with the father-in-law as if he were his own son. During the time of his servitude, he lives on the smiles of his mistress, which ought to be very benignant to enable him to endure so long the frowns of an imperious master, who never spares him from the severest labour and fatigue. Our Toyune himself assured me he had served three years for his wife under a very hard master, and that nothing but the love he bore his intended bride could have made him support it!"

We cannot quit Kamtchatka without noticing a volcano with which our author makes us acquainted. A smile may intrude, when we find it compared to Etna, a ruder symptom supervenes when we find it renders Mr. Dobell poetical, but we bar the poetry, at least for the present.

* Watsky is whiskey made of rye.

"At the back of the village rises the majestic volcano Kloodchefskey, rearing his awful and flaming head a considerable distance above the clouds. This huge mountain towering to the skies, is a perfect cone, decreasing gradually from its enormous base to the summit. Kloodchefskey may perhaps be inferior to Etna in size, but it certainly surpasses it in beauty. The summit is eternally covered with snow, and from the crater issues a volume of flame and smoke that streaks the sky for many miles. Sometimes quantities of fine ashes are thrown out, which fall almost imperceptibly, and impregnate the atmosphere, so as to be inhaled in breathing. The inhabitants informed me, that they affect the lungs, and produce a tickling cough, and a swelling of the glands similar to that occasioned by suppression of perspiration. When a pure flame issues from the crater of Kloodchefskey, it is seen at the Tigil and Aleutian coasts, at the distance of three hundred versts. I thought the valley of Sherrom very beautiful; but here the sublime is so happily blended with the beautiful, that I gave the preference to Klutchee, and nothing can exceed the majesty and grandeur of Kloodchefskey. The inhabitants also informed me, that this volcano had once thrown out a whitish clammy substance like honey, which stuck to the fingers, and was perfectly sweet to the taste, but disappeared about mid-day, when the sun shone out bright and warm. From their description of this phenomenon, I am rather inclined to think it must have been what is called the honey dew, which has fallen in other parts of the world, particularly in the Carolinas and South America. I could not forbear requesting the colonel to permit the boat to pass gently along without paddling, in order to feast my eyes on the magnificent scene before us. It is greatly to be regretted, that this sublime object is situated in such a remote corner of the globe. There are warm mineral springs on the river Klutchee, which I afterwards visited."

As a fair specimen of Mr. Dobell's travelling adventures, and of his manner of telling a story, we select the following passages; there are many of a similar description throughout the work.

"As we had lost our way from the commencement, the Toyune came to me to hold a consultation as to what was to be done. I told him he was an inhabitant of the country, and must be the better judge, and I should leave it to him to decide. He said: 'As it is impossible to make a fire—if we remain here, and the poorga continues all night, we shall be frozen to death: we had therefore better keep moving; but don't you give a dram to any one until I tell you; for watsky is not good at such a time. I have great confidence in my dogs, and if there is a reindeer on the plain, they will find him.'

"After this speech, he pushed on his dogs, to take what road they liked, first giving orders to the party to watch strictly each other, and not to separate on any account. To our surprise, the dogs, instead of taking what we imagined to be the road, turned off from the sea, and brought the wind nearly on our backs. Although this alarmed many, who thought they were going wrong, they found it much more comfortable than to go against the sharp sleet that tore the skin from their faces.

"We continued travelling in this manner for upwards of two hours. The poorga raged with

redoubled fury; the clouds of sleet rolled like a dark smoke over the moor, and we were all so benumbed with cold that our teeth chattered in our heads. The sleet, driven with such violence, had got into our clothes, and penetrated even under our parkas, and into our baggage, wherever there was the smallest crevice. At length, the Toyune's dogs began to snuff the air, bark loudly, and set out at full speed. It was like a shock of electricity. The rest of the dogs followed this example, and strained every nerve to keep pace with them. Our hearts now beat high; for we were sure the dogs smelt the reindeer, and this emotion had already infused a warmth through our veins, as we anticipated the happiness of finding shelter from a dreadful storm that threatened us with death. In about ten minutes more, we had the ineffable pleasure of finding ourselves near a large Karaikee Jourta, where we saw a fine fire blazing!

"The Karaikees had all run out with their clubs and spears, to defend their reindeer from the dogs, which our drivers, benumbed as they were, could hardly keep from running on the herd that surrounded the Jourta. The Karaikees, who were to leeward of us, had heard the dogs for some time, and, anticipating our arrival, had already killed a fine fat buck; and the women were skinning him when we arrived. It was some time before we could shake the snow and sleet from off us, and enjoy the comfort of shelter and a fine fire. I now administered a dram of watky (rye whiskey) to each, and the Toyune said, "This is the time to drink a glass, for should it put us to sleep, there is no danger of being frozen before such a good fire." The women engaged in skinning the deer soon finished their work, and then cut it up into several large pieces, and put them into a large kettle to boil, which had been prepared for the purpose.

"Our host was a fine hospitable old man, who possessed a herd of nearly three hundred sleek reindeer; and he seemed overjoyed to have us for guests. He made me sit down on some nice warm bear skins spread near the fire, which was in the centre of the Jourta. Behind me was a place apart, well hung and lined with deer skins, for me to sleep in. As soon as the deer was boiled, a large wooden trough was placed before me, and into it were put the tongue, the heart, and one of the fattest pieces of the reindeer, as well as the marrow that had been extracted from the bones whilst raw. I expressed my dislike to the latter in its raw state, and the old chief caused it to be boiled immediately: however, I ate of it raw afterwards, and found it well flavoured. Our host made signs to me to commence; but I would not, until I got my interpreter to tell him that I expected the Toyunes and himself to join me, for he had placed enough before me for half a dozen persons. They accepted my invitation, and I treated them with watky, and biscuit made of rye bread. The host took nothing but bread and watky during the dinner. He drank five or six glasses, which I thought would have made him drunk; but they seemed not to affect him in the least, and he drank two more after dinner without being intoxicated!"

We purpose accompanying our author to the confines of Russia proper, and paying a brief visit with him to the inhabitants of the celestial empire, in our next publication.

Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry.—With etchings, by W. H. Brooke. 2 vols. Dublin, Curry and Co.

SECOND NOTICE.

In our late review of this work, we gave the author the high praise of describing with minute and graphic accuracy whatever is cognizable by the external senses. As the book is still but a few days published, and has not yet reached any other literary periodical, we willingly avail ourselves of the opportunity of confirming our views, and amusing our readers, by presenting them with the following description of the commencement of

A PARTY FIGHT:

"Ere the quarrel commenced, you might see a dark and hateful glare scowling from the countenances of the two parties, as they viewed and approached each other in the street—the eye was set in deadly animosity, and the face marked with an ireful paleness, occasioned at once by revenge and apprehension. Groups were silently hurrying with an eager and energetic step to their places of rendezvous, grasping their weapons more closely, or grinding their teeth in the impatience of their fury.—The veterans on each side were surrounded by their respective followers, anxious to act under their direction; and the very boys seemed to be animated with a martial spirit, much more eager than that of those who had greater experience in party quarrels. Jem Finigan's public house was the headquarters and rallying point of the Ribbonmen—the Orangemen assembled in that of Joe Sherlock, the master of an Orange lodge. About six o'clock, the crowd in the street began gradually to fall off to the opposite ends of the town—the Roman Catholics towards the north, and the Protestants towards the south. Carson's window, from which I was observing their motions, was exactly half way between them, so that I had a distinct view of both. At this moment, I noticed Denis Kelly coming forward from the closely condensed mass formed by the Ribbonmen: he advanced, with his cravat off, to the middle of the vacant space between the parties, holding a fine oak cudgel in his hand. He then stopped, and addressing the Orangemen, said, 'Where's Vengeance and his crew now? Is there any single Orange villain among you that dare come down and meet me here, like a man? Is John Grimes there? for if he is, before we begin to take you of a face—to hunt you altogether out of the town, ye Orange villains—I would be glad that he'd step down to Denis Kelly here, for two or three minutes; I'll not keep him longer.'

"There was now a stir and a murmur among the Orangemen, as if a rush was about to take place towards Denis; but Grimes, whom I saw endeavouring to curb them in, left the crowd, and advanced towards him. At this moment, an instinctive movement among both masses took place; so that when Grimes had come within a few yards of Kelly, both crowds were within two or three perches of them.—Kelly was standing, apparently off his guard, with one hand thrust carelessly in the breast of his waistcoat, and the cudgel in the other; but his eye was fixed calmly upon Grimes as he approached. They were both powerful, fine men—brawny, vigorous, and active. Grimes had somewhat the advantage of the other in height; he also fought with his left hand, from which circumstance he was nicknamed *Kithogue*.—

He was a man of a dark, stern-looking countenance; and the tones of his voice were deep, sullen, and of appalling strength. As they approached each other, the windows on each side of the street were crowded; but there was not a breath to be heard in any direction, nor from either party. As for myself, my heart palpitated with anxiety. What *they* might have felt I do not know; but they must have also experienced considerable apprehension; for as they were both the champions of their respective parties, and had never before met in single encounter, their characters depended on the issue of the contest. 'Well, Grimes, said Denis, 'sure I've often wished for this same meetin' man, betune myself and you; I have what you're goin' to get in for you this long time: but you'll get it now, avick, plase God.—' 'It was not to scold I came, you popish, ribby rascal,' replied Grimes, 'but to give you what you're long.—' Ere the word had been out of his mouth, however, Kelly sprung over to him; and making a feint, as if he intended to lay the stick on his ribs, he swung it past without touching him, and bringing it round his own head like lightning, made it tell with a powerful backstroke right on Grimes's temple, and in an instant his own face was sprinkled with the blood which sprung from the wound: Grimes staggered forward towards his antagonist, seeing which, Kelly sprung back, and was again meeting him with full force, when Grimes, turning a little, clutched Kelly's stick in his right hand, and being left-handed himself, ere the other could wrench the cudgel from him, he gave him a terrible blow upon the back part of the head, which laid Kelly in the dust.—There was now a deafening shout from the Orange party, and Grimes stood until Kelly should be in the act of rising, ready then to give him another blow. The coolness and generalship of Kelly, however, were here very remarkable; for, when he was just getting to his feet, 'look at your party coming down upon me,' he exclaimed to Grimes, who turned round to order them back, and, in the interim, Kelly was upon his legs. I was now surprised at the coolness of both men; for Grimes was by no means inflated with the boisterous triumph of his party—nor did Denis get into a blind rage on being knocked down. They now approached again, their eyes kindled into savage fury, tamed down into the wariness of experienced combatants; for a short time they stood eyeing each other, as if calculating upon the contingent advantages of attack or defence. This was a moment of great interest; for, as their huge and powerful frames stood out in opposition, strung and dilated by the impulse of passion and the energy of contest, no judgment, however experienced, could venture to anticipate the result of the battle, or name the person likely to be victorious. Indeed it was surprising how the natural sagacity of these men threw their attitudes and movements into scientific form and elegance. Kelly raised his cudgel, and placed it transversely in the air, between himself and his opponent; Grimes instantly placed his against it—both weapons thus forming a cross—whilst the men themselves stood foot opposite to foot, calm and collected. Nothing could be finer than their proportions, nor superior to their respective attitudes—their broad chests were in a line—their thick, well-set necks, laid a little back, as were their bodies—without, however, losing their balance—and their fierce, but calm features,